JOSHUA WILLIAMSON
ANDREA MILANA
LEE LOUGHRIDGE
G.I. JOE
image
#22

ENERGON UNIVERSE

CODENAME:

G.I. JOE

[MISSION LOG [04.022.01]

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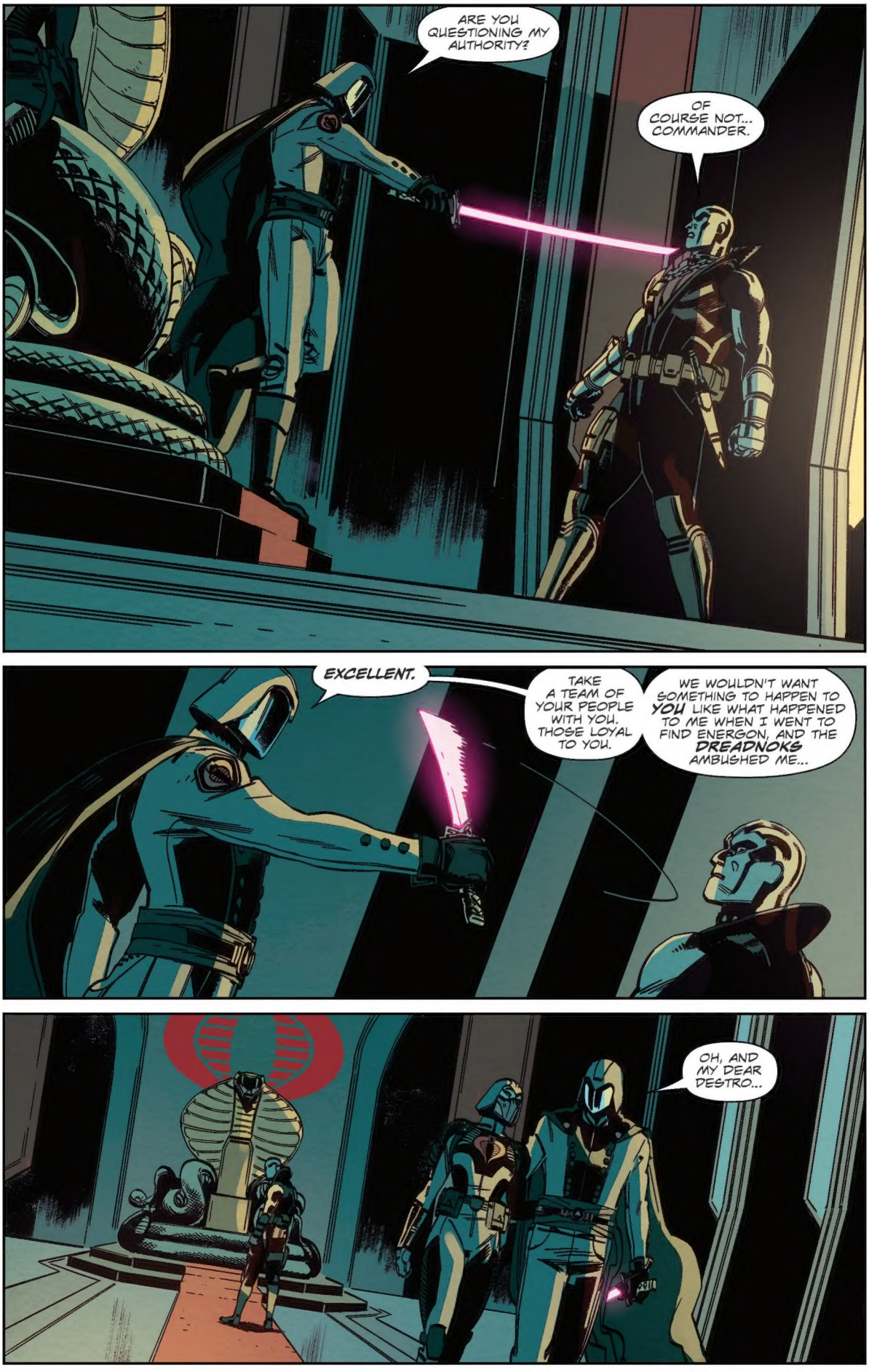
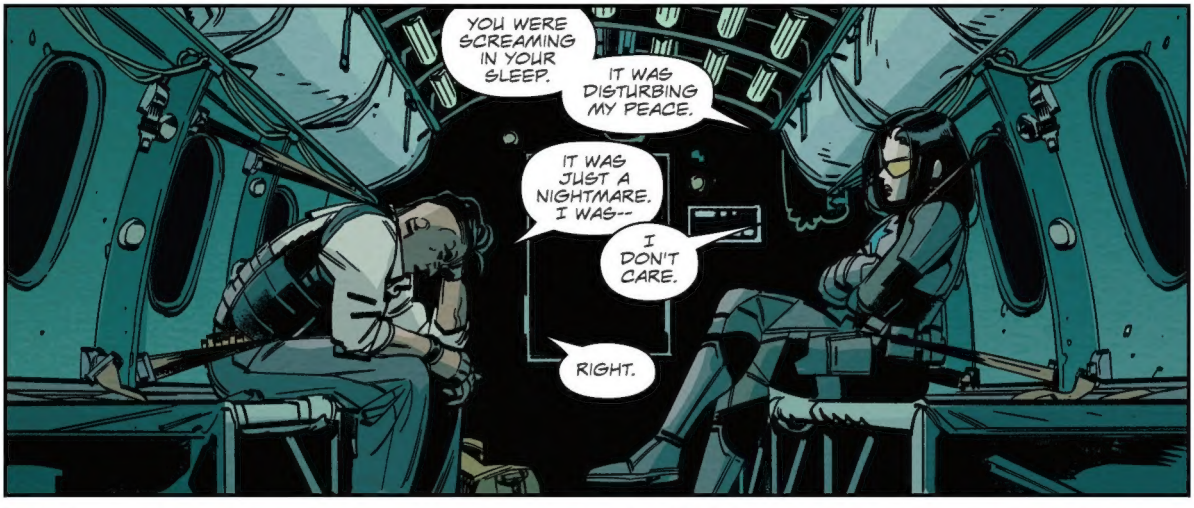
I BELIEVE IT IS TIME YOU WENT ON A FIELD MISSION.
AND I BELIEVE I AM BETTER SUITED HERE, COMMANDER.
AFTER THE ATTACK BY THE DREADNOKS AND NOW YOUR OWN ASSAULT ON THE ARASHIKAGE, COBRA HAS MULTIPLE TARGETS ON OUR BACK.
HM. YES. BUT IT WAS WORTH IT. I COULD HAVE STAYED HERE AND RESTED, BUT I FINALLY RETRIEVED THIS LOVELY WEAPON, DESTRO.
I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR YOU TO...GET OUT OF THE HOUSE, SO TO SPEAK.
THERE IS A LOCATION I SUSPECT HAS AN ENERGON DEPOSIT, AND YOU WILL GO THERE TO GET IT.
THAT WOULD BE A WASTE OF MY SKILLS.
IF THERE IS ENERGON THERE, I CAN SEND MERCER, WHILE I REMAIN BEHIND AND CONTINUE TO DEVELOP OUR WEAPONS...


ARE YOU QUESTIONING MY AUTHORITY?
OF COURSE NOT... COMMANDER.
EXCELLENT.
TAKE A TEAM OF YOUR PEOPLE WITH YOU. THOSE LOYAL TO YOU.
WE WOULDN'T WANT SOMETHING TO HAPPEN TO YOU LIKE WHAT HAPPENED TO ME WHEN I WENT TO FIND ENERGON, AND THE DREADNOKS AMBUSHED ME...
OH, AND MY DEAR DESTRO...

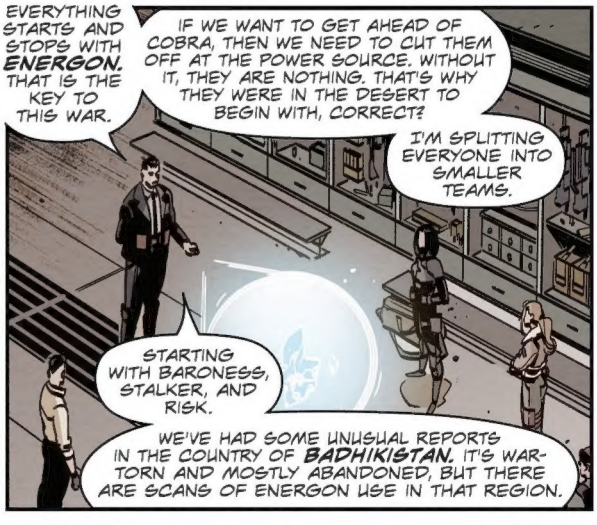
LONDON.
"DO NOT FAIL ME."
YOU SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT CALL?
DON'T WORRY, ROOKIE.
"RISK" DID THE MATH.
IT'S NOT MATH. IT'S RISK ASSESSMENT. I CONSIDER ALL SITUATIONS. ALL VARIABLES.
IT'S LIKE IN THE CAGE. YOU DON'T THROW PUNCHES WILDLY. YOU CALCULATE. EVERY HIT MATTERS.
TRUST ME.
DON'T WORRY, RICH BOY. WE GET IT. YOU'VE PROVEN YOURSELF TO THE HIGHER-UPS.
YOU JUST GOTTA SHOW ME YOU CAN HANDLE THE REAL DEAL.
THE TERRORISTS DON'T HAVE HEAVY ARMS. ONLY HANDGUNS. WE CAN TAKE THEM. THEY DON'T EXPECT A RESPONSE THIS FAST.
WE'LL HAVE THE HOSTAGES OUT IN TIME FOR LAST CALL.

BANG
POLICE
WE'RE OUTNUMBERED!
DAMMIT! MOVE, MOVE, MOVE.
BOOM

NO!


YOU WERE SCREAMING IN YOUR SLEEP.
IT WAS DISTURBING MY PEACE.
IT WAS JUST A NIGHTMARE. I WAS--
I DON'T CARE.
RIGHT.

ARE YOU GOOD FOR THE MISSION, RISK?
YOU HEARD HAWK'S ORDERS...


EVERYTHING STARTS AND STOPS WITH ENERGON. THAT IS THE KEY TO THIS WAR.
IF WE WANT TO GET AHEAD OF COBRA, THEN WE NEED TO CUT THEM OFF AT THE POWER SOURCE. WITHOUT IT, THEY ARE NOTHING. THAT'S WHY THEY WERE IN THE DESERT TO BEGIN WITH, CORRECT?
I'M SPLITTING EVERYONE INTO SMALLER TEAMS.
STARTING WITH BARONESS, STALKER, AND RISK.
WE'VE HAD SOME UNUSUAL REPORTS IN THE COUNTRY OF BADHIKISTAN. IT'S WAR-TORN AND MOSTLY ABANDONED, BUT THERE ARE SCANS OF ENERGON USE IN THAT REGION.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, KIDS.
PREPARE FOR LANDING.

WHOMP WHOMP WHOMP WHOMP WHO

BADHIKISTAN.

HOW DID HAWK KNOW THERE COULD BE ENERGON HERE?

HE DIDN'T SAY.

I BELIEVE THE COLONEL IS IN A NEED-TO-KNOW STATE OF MIND.

BEEP. SECURE.

THIS PLACE IS GIVING ME THE WILLIES.

HOW IS IT TOTALLY ABANDONED?

WAS THERE A RADIATION ATTACK?

THE FILE SAID THE PEOPLE LEFT BECAUSE THE CITY IS *HAUNTED.*

YOU BELIEVE IN GHOSTS, STALKER?
WE'VE COME FACE-TO-FACE WITH GIANT ROBOTS, SO I'LL BELIEVE IN A LOT.
I'VE SEEN THINGS IN THE JUNGLE THAT I COULD NEVER EXPLAIN.
PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN GHOSTS ARE WEAK. THEY HOPE THERE IS SOMETHING BEYOND THE LIFE WE LEAD HERE.
YOU ONLY HAVE THE TIME YOU HAVE ON THIS PLANET, THERE IS NO MORE.
DEAD IS DEAD.
HARSH. YOU DON'T BELIEVE THERE COULD BE MORE TO LIFE? THINGS WE DON'T UNDERSTAND?

CRASH!
BE ALERT, JOES. WE'VE GOT COMPANY.
IS THAT...AN ANIMAL?
SKREET SKREET SKREET
WHATEVER IT WAS...IT'S ON THE MOVE.
SHOULD WE FOLLOW?
YOU SEE ITS EYES? THAT GLOW? COULD BE RADIATION...
SO, THAT'S A YES.
CRAP...

YOUR SCARE TACTICS ARE NOT GOING TO WORK ON US, G.I. JOE.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING ON ABOUT? WE HAVEN'T BEEN DOING ANYTHING.
PLEASE. WE KNOW YOU'RE TRYING TO MANIPULATE US.
ELABORATE.
EVER SINCE WE SET FOOT HERE, WE'VE HAD EYES ON US.
STALKED.
WE JUST LANDED, COBRA.
YOU'RE SAYING YOU HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT CREATURE WE JUST SAW?

NO.
BUT WE ALSO SAW A CREATURE RUN THIS WAY.
DOESN'T TAKE A GENIUS TO KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE.
ENERGON.
AND WE WILL BE LEAVING WITH THE ENERGON.
OVER MY DEAD BODY.
OH, I LOVE IT WHEN PEOPLE LIKE YOU SAY STUFF LIKE THAT.
IT'S LIKE YOU'RE GIVING ME PERMISSION TO RIP YOUR HEAD OFF WITH MY BARE HANDS, AND THEN STEP OVER YOUR HEADLESS BODY.
EASE UP, MERCER. THERE IS NO REASON FOR VIOLENCE TODAY.
CLEARLY THERE IS A THIRD PARTY INVOLVED. PERHAPS WE SHOULD--

GET IT!
BANG
JOES. MOVE.
CALM DOWN, MERCER!
DON'T--
WE CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT IS GOING ON HERE AFTER WE TAKE DOWN COBRA!
BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
NOT WHAT I WOULD HAVE LIKED, BUT LET'S DO IT!

YOU IGNORANT AMERICANS.
TSH
TSH
TSH
TSH
YOU DARE FIRE AT MY LOVE?
KK!
ASTORIA!
BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
STALKER, I'M IN PURSUIT!
WE NEED TO GET TO COVER AND REGROUP!

WHAT THE--?!
HELP!
--HELL IS GOING--!
AAAHHHH!!

YOU DON'T HAVE A DANG ROBOT TO SAVE YOU THIS TIME!
DON'T NEED ONE!
POW POW POW POW POW
KRACK!
THK!
NICE MOVES, RISK. BUT IT TAKES A LOT MORE THAN FANCY KICKS AND PUNCHES TO LEAVE A DENT IN ME.
STAND DOWN, MERCER.
OR I WILL FIRE.
HOW MANY SHOTS DO YOU THINK YOU CAN GET OFF BY THE TIME I GET MY MITTS AROUND YOUR NECK?

AAHHHHHH...
BANG
BANG

WHAT THE #$$@ WAS THAT?
MERCER?
WELL, ISN'T THIS A TREAT.

I HAVEN'T HAD TEST SUBJECTS IN QUITE SOME TIME.
I DEVELOPED THE D.I.R.E. TECH TO INTERROGATE INMATES. TO GET THEM TO REVEAL THEIR SECRETS.
BUT I WAS TOLD I WENT TOO FAR.
THEY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND.
MY D.I.R.E. TECH POWERED BY ENERGON DOESN'T JUST CREATE ILLUSIONS.
IT PEERS INTO YOUR HEART...IT STUDIES YOUR SOUL.
IT READS YOUR MIND...

"...TO FIND YOUR FEARS..."
MERCER?
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?
HOW...? THIS ISN'T RIGHT...I REMEMBER...
YOU LED US TO OUR DEATH...

AND NOW WE'RE TAKING YOU TO YOURS!
LET THE GAMES BEGIN...

STRAIGHT SHOOTERS

DIRECT ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: GIJOE@SKYBOUND.COM

Greetings! I'm SO excited this first issue of our new arc is out as when Joshua first said "horror" in regards to issues #22-24, I was all in! And knowing that Andrea Milana would be drawing these issues was literally perfect casting! Anyway, I'm your faithful editor, Ben Abernathy, and I'm joined as always by the man himself, writer Joshua Williamson!

HELLO! WELCOME TO G.I. HORROR!

I hope you enjoyed the first issue of our Risk and Crystal Ball tale. Andrea killed it on the horror pieces! This three issue arc was actually influenced by one of my favorite episodes of the cartoon. It's one of the weirder episodes. I'm curious if you can guess which episode it was…

Let's dig into the mailbag!

Yo Joe Gents!

Optimus & Duke's conversation was completely perfect. Every word was exactly what you would expect to hear without it being shallow.

My compliments to Josh Williamson for giving each character a distinct voice.

One character that has not been explored enough yet is Stalker. Would love to see more of his input in mission decisions.

I'd love to find more room for Stalker. I love that guy.

That leads me to my last request: Admittedly, there's been very little time to explore Stalker, Risk, or any of the Night Force team during this run.

I would love if Skybound brought back regular 4-5 issue miniseries or even Spotlight issues that highlighted a different G.I. Joe, Transformer, or any of the other fascinating citizens from the Energon Universe. Would be a great successor to the excellent G.I. Joe miniseries that kicked off this corner of the universe & make each character feel more developed in this massive universe.

Stay frosty like a YoJoe Cola!
-Nathanael

P.S. Psyche Out would be a great addition to the cast.

Thank you for the letter, Nathanael, and Stalker and Risk are major parts of the current arc so we'll definitely get to know them a bit more. Spotlight issues could be fun, though, it's something to consider down the line…

It's 100% on my wish list. A kind of G.I. Joe Mission Files anthology. I'd love it if we did an Energon Universe monthly anthology. It would be fun to see more stand-alone stories with the awesome cast we've been using. Those are also some of my favorite issues to write. Maybe someday!

Also, you read my mind. I was just thinking about Psyche-Out the other day! Maybe because his Classified figure was recently teased…

Hello again Joes!

First, I wanna say thank you so, so much for printing my letter back on issue 15! You have no idea how thrilled and happy that made me! And I will be "staying tuned" to find out if Starscream and Cobra Commander sound similar lol!

I just finished issue 20! And I LOVE how Optimus was written and drawn in it! Seeing him smiling and almost giddy at times really made me happy, especially after what the poor bot has been through. Also, it reminds me of how in G1, whenever Rodimus didn't have the Matrix, he was way more relaxed and happy, because he didn't have the weight of everything the Matrix brings on his shoulders.

Thanks! Yeah, I felt like Duke and Optimus had a lot in common. Leaders who are always in the field with their teams. They would respect each other. So that's where I started and the conversation between them grew from there.

It's weird but interesting for me to see the G.I. Joe organization starting from the ground up. Usually, I'm used to seeing it already being a thing. And it's interesting seeing it grow, but I'm definitely at that feeling of wishing there were a lot more characters introduced, and it seemed like Stalker, and I would agree on that. In the show, I remember there being SO MANY of them.

Trust me. I always want to introduce more characters, but I want to make sure they all get the room to breathe and show up in the best way possible.

I'm really enjoying seeing Cobra in this series. Maybe it's because they feel like a fully set-up organization already. I love their home base of Springfield. And for whatever reason, my favorite part of this comic is when we just take time and explore the Cobra organization. I also find them a lot more hilarious as well. And it was interesting seeing much more of Cobra Commander's face than I was expecting recently. In a weird way, it kinda felt wrong lol. But I loved the look of his faint eye in the crack on his

visor. Seriously, Cobra Commander is my favorite thing about this comic! And I see what you meant about this being a version who never retreats, him wielding the chainsaw arm, and the machine gun, and somehow recruiting the Dreadnoks was just fantastic! Plus, I love his look with his sword! So please delve as deep into the Cobra lore as y'all can!

I also love Cobra Commander and Cobra! You'll get a lot of both in the series soon!

Now onto some questions:

Will we ever see CC's cloth mask look? Even though I like his helmet look better, it would be cool to see that again sometimes.

I don't know? It's not in my current plans. I prefer the helmet? And there is another look I want to bring in soon…

And does Hound have his famous hologram ability? Cause I haven't seen him use it yet. Maybe that's how he was able to hide so well in the Pit?

I felt like it was damaged when they crashed. But it will be a factor in the future.

Would y'all ever create an original Joe or Cobra for this comic? Like how we have Shredhead in TF? (And if you need help coming up with a name, Diesel is a good one ;))

Risk! And we have a few new characters coming up soon…

And I know it is probably way too early to ask this, but have there been any thoughts towards Serpentor? After you explained this Cobra Commander it got me thinking about him. In the show, he was made to replace CC because everyone was tired of how incompetent he was. But now they are all power hungry, and CC is a really capable leader. Would he instead be a pawn of Cobra-La? One sent to put Cobra under their control? I would really like to see how this Cobra Commander goes up against him, as opposed to the more cowardly version from the cartoon.

I know this letter was long, but it's because I really love this series and universe! So thank you again for it, and I am so excited for the future of it!

-Diesel

I have an idea for Serpentor that will be different and unexpected. But we have a lot of plans for Cobra Commander that will happen first. To be honest, Cobra Commander is my fav character in G.I. Joe and so I was super annoyed when Serpentor was introduced. But I do have an idea on how to introduce him…

Wow.

I've been a fan since 1983. Issue #20 literally made me cry. "G.I. Joe roll out".

Thank you for this amazing issue.
JC

Glad that moment landed…it was such an awesome scene, I get goosebumps thinking about it!

NICE! Thank you!

Yo Joe!!

I just finished issue #20 and WOAH-- what an issue! I've kept up with all of the Energon Universe since it debuted back in 2023 with Void Rivals #1 and this might be one of my favorite issues yet!! Seeing Optimus and Duke finally interact was everything I could've wanted. Not to mention the implications this issue has for the Energon Universe as a whole!! M.A.S.K. is gearing up for what's sure to be an interesting entry in the EU, Optimus and Duke are on solid terms, and we're finally getting an update on what Scarlett has been up to?? This issue is everything I could've asked for! Hopefully Arashikage's return will mean we get to see some more Storm Shadow...maybe we even get to see Snake Eyes finally?? It's only the best rivalry in G.I. Joe! Regardless, you guys are doing killer work! I'm always glued to the page when I'm reading and I can't wait to see what the future holds!

-Conor

Thank you for the letter, Conor, and sticking with us for the long term. Honored to have you aboard! I'm so glad we delivered on the Optimus and Duke meeting and I'm SO excited for you to see what we have in store this year! It's gonna be EPIC!

Glad you liked #20 so much! It was an issue loaded with connections to…a LOT. Haha. But the focus to me was the Duke and Optimus scenes.

As for the rest of your questions…stay tuned!

And that's a wrap, folks! Keep the letters coming and see ya next month!

-Ben

Thank you for continuing to read our G.I. JOE adventures! It means a lot to us to hear that you liked the Duke and Optimus issue. So, in honor of that…G.I. JOE…ROLL OUT!

-Joshua Williamson

ENERGON EXPERIENCE

SO excited that we're finally doing a horror arc in G.I. JOE as it's something writer Joshua Williamson and I have been talking about for a while...and having Andrea Milana draw it is the chef's kiss as his style lends itself perfectly to the genre. Now the real question we're all wondering: Is Baroness afraid of the dark...?

Ben!

Ben Abernathy, Executive Editor

CHARACTER SPOTLIGHT

WHO: Guerrero La Caza

Codename: Risk

WHAT: Formerly with the C.I.A. in a risk assessment role, Risk is a sharp dressing--and sharp shooting--member of G.I. Joe whose favorite hobby is cage fighting. Recruited by Colonel Hawk, Risk might have some skeletons in his well-stocked closet...

D.I.R.E.Y OF A MADMAN!

Crystal Ball and the secrets of his D.I.R.E. TECH are just starting to unfold, but there's clearly something strange going on in Badhikistan. While his motivations are unknown, it's pretty clear that Risk is about to have a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day!

CREATOR SPOTLIGHT

Lee Loughridge, our amazing colorist, joins me to answer the most important question of all!

Q: Lee, if you had a G.I. JOE codename, what would it be?

A: Wild Eagle.

THE ENERGON UNIVERSE CHECKLIST

- ☐ ENERGON UNIVERSE SPECIAL 2026 AVAILABLE 5/6
- ☐ TRANSFORMERS #32 AVAILABLE 5/13
- ☐ G.I. JOE #22 AVAILABLE 5/20
- ☐ VOID RIVALS #30 AVAILABLE 5/27

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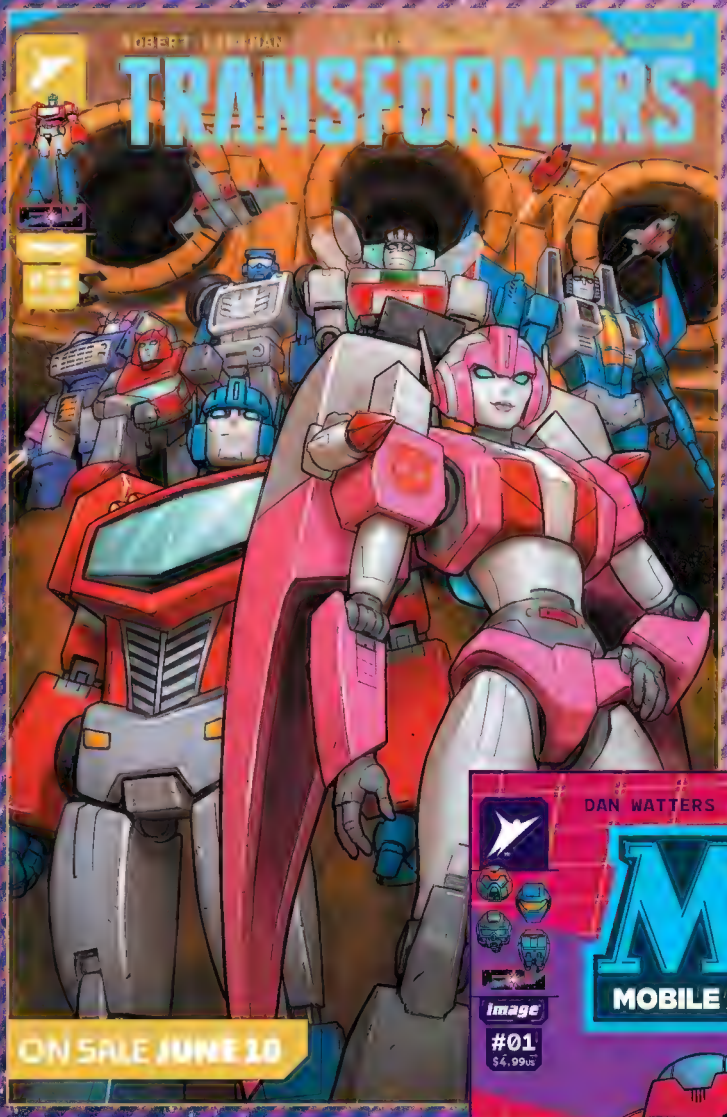
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IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO SAVE THE WORLD.

DAN WATTERS PYE PARR PIERLUIGI CASOLINO

MASK

MOBILE ARMORED STRIKE KOMMAND

THE RACE IS ON JUNE 2026

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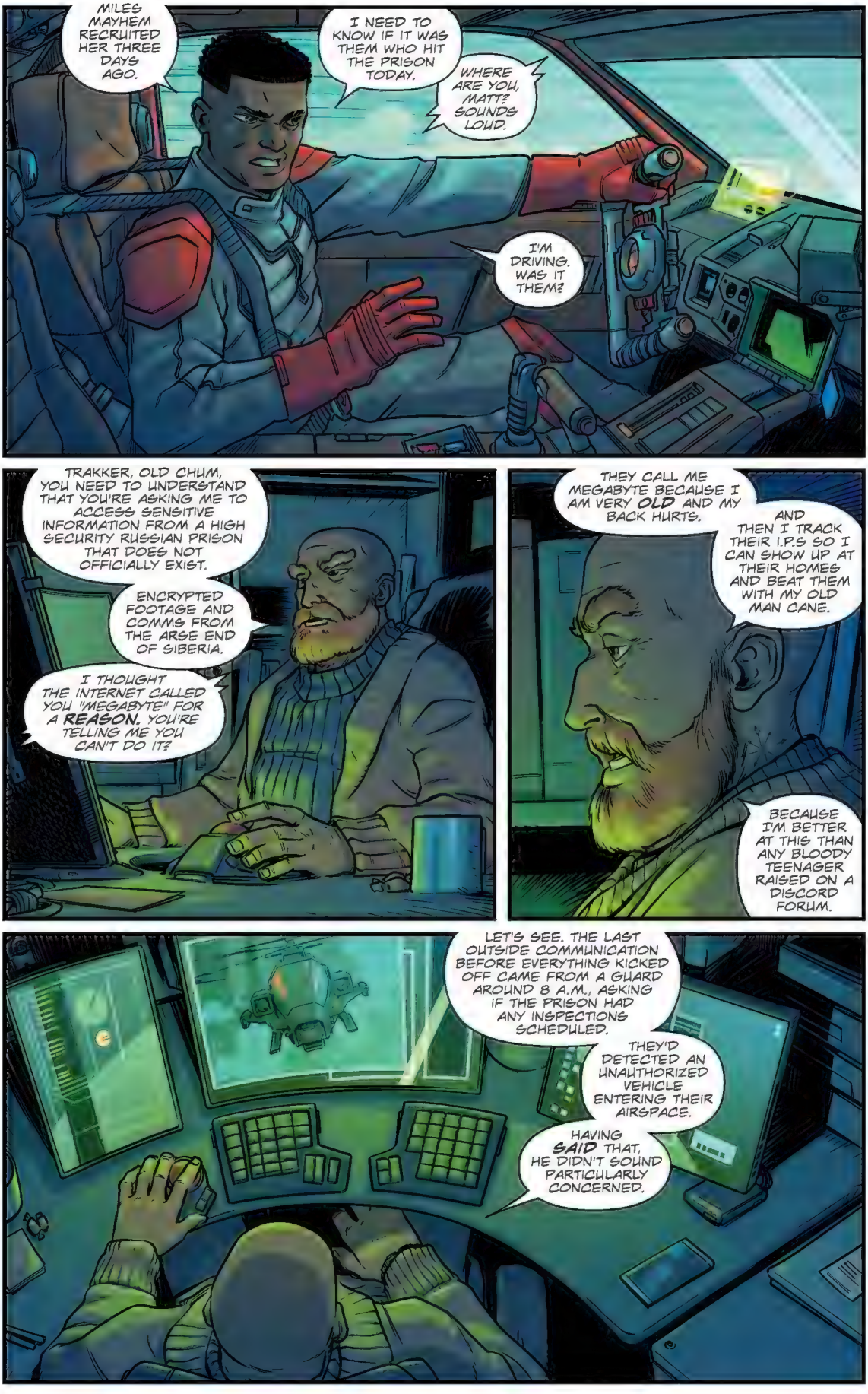
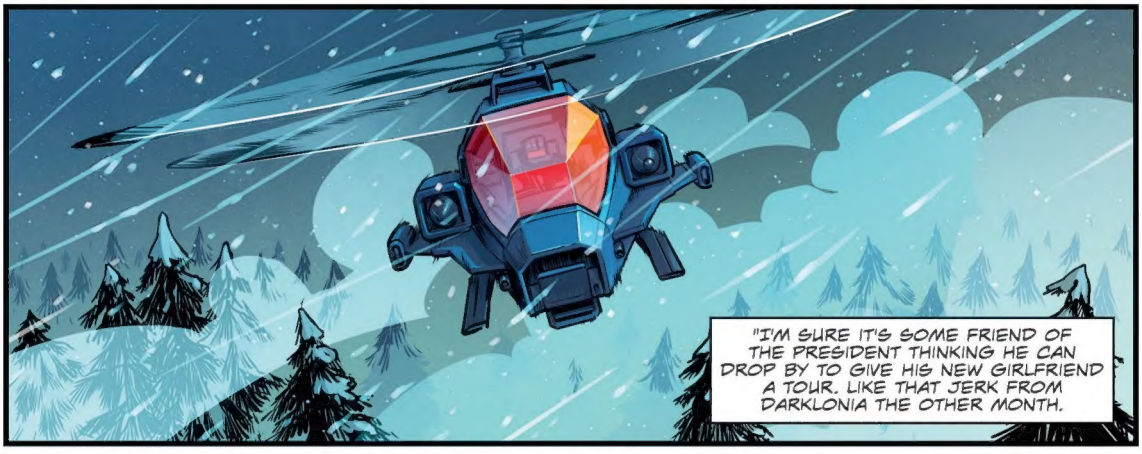
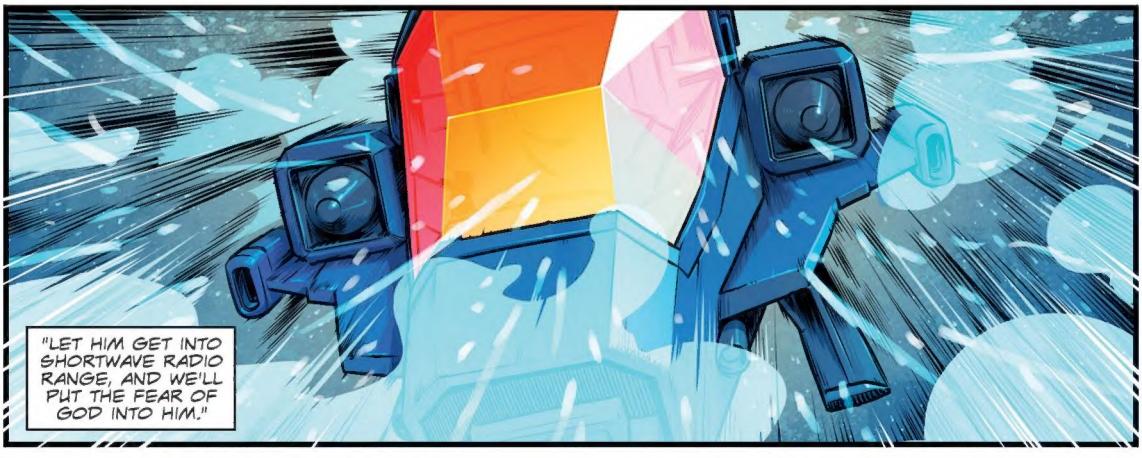

MILES MAYHEM RECRUITED HER THREE DAYS AGO.
I NEED TO KNOW IF IT WAS THEM WHO HIT THE PRISON TODAY.
WHERE ARE YOU, MATT? SOUNDS LOUD.
I'M DRIVING. WAS IT THEM?
TRAKKER, OLD CHUM, YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE ASKING ME TO ACCESS SENSITIVE INFORMATION FROM A HIGH SECURITY RUSSIAN PRISON THAT DOES NOT OFFICIALLY EXIST.
ENCRYPTED FOOTAGE AND COMMS FROM THE ARSE END OF SIBERIA.
I THOUGHT THE INTERNET CALLED YOU "MEGABYTE" FOR A REASON. YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU CAN'T DO IT?
THEY CALL ME MEGABYTE BECAUSE I AM VERY OLD AND MY BACK HURTS.
AND THEN I TRACK THEIR I.P.S SO I CAN SHOW UP AT THEIR HOMES AND BEAT THEM WITH MY OLD MAN CANE.
BECAUSE I'M BETTER AT THIS THAN ANY BLOODY TEENAGER RAISED ON A DISCORD FORUM.
LET'S SEE. THE LAST OUTSIDE COMMUNICATION BEFORE EVERYTHING KICKED OFF CAME FROM A GUARD AROUND 8 A.M., ASKING IF THE PRISON HAD ANY INSPECTIONS SCHEDULED.
THEY'D DETECTED AN UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLE ENTERING THEIR AIRSPACE.
HAVING SAID THAT, HE DIDN'T SOUND PARTICULARLY CONCERNED.

NO. NO NEED TO SOUND THE ALARM. IT'S A PERSONAL HELICOPTER.
NO WEAPONS ON A MACHINE LIKE THAT.


"I'M SURE IT'S SOME FRIEND OF THE PRESIDENT THINKING HE CAN DROP BY TO GIVE HIS NEW GIRLFRIEND A TOUR. LIKE THAT JERK FROM DARKLONIA THE OTHER MONTH.


"LET HIM GET INTO SHORTWAVE RADIO RANGE, AND WE'LL PUT THE FEAR OF GOD INTO HIM."

OKAY. IT WAS MAYHEM.
HOW DO YOU KNOW? PLENTY OF RICH BASTARDS TRAVEL BY HELICOPTER.
BECAUSE THAT WASN'T A HELICOPTER. NOT REALLY...

WAIT...WAIT, WHAT IS IT DOING?!

"...THEY'D JUST ENCOUNTERED THE BLADEJET PROTOTYPE."
MAMA.
TO BE CONTINUED IN
FW MASK
MOBILE ARMORED STRIKE KOMMAND
#1

COLLECT ALL THESE EXCITING ENERGON UNIVERSE COVERS

COVER A

TOM REILLY

COVER B

JOSHUA CASSARA & ROMULO FAJARDO JR.

COVER C

BEN OLIVER

COVER D

TONČI ZONJIĆ

COVER E

ANDREA MILANA

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